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AN INDEPENDENT

ANTI-DRAM-SHOP PARTY.

To Prohibitionists.

LETTER I.

Shall we form an independent anti-dram shop party? Shall we modify the law? Shall we fight *inside* the Republican party? One of these we must do.

Before we decide to form a new party, let us see whether our issue is strictly political, and whether it is needed more than the issues of existing parties.

Majorities rule, and political differences must be settled by vote. Parties ought therefore to represent the *most important* of these differences. If they do not, there is need of a new party.

Let us make no new party unless its issue is *strictly political*, nor unless it is *more important* than other party issues. X.

LETTER II.

The first of all political objects is the support and defence of the state. This depends on men. Their physical development is therefore the first of political interests.

The Board of State Charities (second report from page 23 to 28) tells us that alcohol vitiates human stock. It tells us also, that it has that effect on the *moderate drinker* as well as on the drunkard.* If this be so, an anti-dram shop issue is an important political issue. X.

*Persistent functional disturbance at last brings about organic change. It is worth considering then, whether this peculiarity of alcohol does not make its constant use in small doses worse for posterity than its occasional use in large quantities. (Page 24.)

LETTER III.

Of the political interests of a State, second in order, but supreme in value, stands the *character* of its citizens. Bad citizens are not only worthless but dangerous. The welfare of any State,—the existence of a republic depends on the character of its citizens.

The dram shop system is a common school system of vice. It makes worthless, dangerous, disorderly, unproductive citizens.

For this reason an anti-dram shop issue is more important than other party issues, and should take their place. X.

LETTER IV.

Material prosperity is a political interest. Dram shops diminish production, and therefore impoverish the state. In one of our most extensive manufactories this diminution, under a dram shop policy, was more than fourteen per cent.*

Dram shops not only diminish production, but increase expenditure. The people of the United States pay these shops more than five hundred millions annually.

In its bearing on material wealth the anti-dram shop issue is, therefore, more important than all other political issues. X.

*We find on comparing our production in May and June of this year (1868,) with that of the corresponding months of last year, (1867,) that in 1867 with 375 men we produced eight (8) per cent more goods than we did in the same months in 1868 with 400 men. We attribute this large falling off entirely to the repeal of the prohibitory law and the great increase in the use of intoxicating liquors among our men in consequence. Yours respectfully,

OLIVER AMES & SONS.

LETTER V.

The preservation of the peace is a political interest. In large cities it is a great part of the work of the goverment.

Breaches of the peace are chiefly caused by dram shops. So are three fourths of the arrests. Drink makes their customers noisy and

quarrelsome, and the police must then arrest them.

Under this brutal policy the chief function of the police is that of dram shop scavengers. It is their duty to collect the refuse customers of these shops as fast as they are sufficiently plucked and gorged.

An issue against a system which *breaks* the peace, and in favor of a system which *preserves* it, is more important than any other pending political issue. X.

LETTER VI.

Protection to person and property is a political interest. Dram shops diminish that protection. They cause three fourths of the offences against person and property, and to that extent lessen their security.

Dram Shops corrupt the purity of the ballot and thus sap the basis of Government.

An issue that would preserve the ballot from that source of corruption, and give threefold security to person and property, is more political and more important than democratic or republican issues.

LETTER VII.

Repression of pauperism is a political interest. No man who ignores that interest has any claim to the reputation of a statesman. The two following letters, though written several years ago, will show the relation between pauperism and the dram shop system:

BOSTON, February 18th, 1864.

DEAR SIR:—With regard to the question you ask as to the number of families that have been aided by the Boston Provident Association, I would answer that for the past 11 years we have aided 34,126 families containing 126,932 persons.*

The proportion of poverty caused by the free use of intoxicating drink I should judge to be fully eight tenths. Yours, truly,

A. G. GOODWIN, *Gen'l Agt.*

To H. D. CUSHING, Esq.

*The average of the above is a little more than three and seven-tenths persons to each family.

OVERSEERS OF THE POOR.
21 Bromfield Street, Boston, Feb. 26, 1864.

H. D. CUSHING, ESQ.,

DEAR SIR,—Your note of inquiry respecting the families "relieved or supported by the city of Boston, for the last seven years," &c., is received. You ask for an abstract of of the *number* of persons, including their families," &c. * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

I find, by the "Abstracts of the Returns relating to the Poor,' '&c., made by the Secretary of the Commonwealth," that the number of persons relieved by the Overseers of the Poor, of the city of Boston, for the seven years last past, ending December 31st, 1863, is as follows:*

In the year 1857.....	9,369
" 1858,.....	8,447
" 1859,.....	9,087
" 1860,.....	9,131
" 1861,.....	10,829
" 1862,.....	12,190
" 1863,.....	11,564
In seven years,.....	70,917

Estimating that four persons on an average, have received the benefit of the aid rendered to each recorded name, will make the whole number thus benefited, amount to 283,668 in *seven years* or 40,524 *yearly*.

Most respectfully, your ob'dt serv't,
JOHN W. WARREN, *Chairman.*
Overseers of the Boston Poor.

*In most of these Abstracts the Boston estimate of the proportion impoverished by intemperance is seventy-five per cent.

An issue upon a question so largely affecting the extent of pauperism, is more important than the present issues between democrats and republicans. X.

LETTER VIII.

Suppression of brothels and gaming houses is a political interest. Prostitution and gaming affect the ordinary objects of government. They vitiate human stock, make bad, unproductive, worthless, and dangerous citizens, and increase pauperism, crime and taxation.

As a business, gaming houses, and more especially brothels, depend on dram shops for their existence. Dram shops furnish the customers, and create the poverty that brings in the stock.

As a security against these evils, an anti-dram shop policy is more important than other pending issues. X.

LETTER IX.

Next to the *character* of its citizens, the most important political interest of a state is the interest of labor. Labor is the life blood of the state.

The dram shop policy enslaves labor. It subjects wages to the will of the employer, and then preys upon its reduced earnings. It robs the laboring poor of food, fuel, clothing and shelter.

An issue that will redeem labor from this source of degradation, is incomparably more important than republican or democratic issues, and should take their place. x.

LETTER X.

Not only rejecting all that is not strictly political, but confining ourselves to the *ordinary* objects of government, we find,

1st, that dram shops vitiate human stock;

2nd, that they make worthless citizens;

3rd, that they increase taxes, and diminish tax-payers;

4th, that they diminish productive industry;

5th, that they cost in cash five hundred millions, annually;

6th, that they corrupt the purity of the ballot.

7th, that they endanger the public peace;

8th, that they make gaming houses and brothels. paupers and criminals;

9th, that they enslave labor: that they make its wages and its hours of service depend on the will of the employer:

10th, that they lessen the protection of person and property.

If dram shops thus obstruct all the ordinary objects of government, an issue against them is more political and incomparably more important than any existing party issue. x.

LETTER XI.

But, instead of making a new party, can we not modify the law? If we can, we are more than willing. None more than we, want more votes, and less opposition.

We know well that modifying the law, has no limit but the necessities of a competition with the democratic party for the vote of the liquor traffic, and that *our bid must be as high as that* of the competing party.

But though we know this, yet let us candidly consider the modifications offered by good men who do not know it. At present, these are comprised in the beer, hotel, and apothecary exemptions.

LETTER XII.

Let us first consider the beer exemption. Fermented liquors are not so strong, and the inference is that they are not so hurtful as distilled. But all testimony contradicts the inference. The beer traffic, more than the spirit traffic is the bane of England to-day.

Drinkers do not drink for the palate, but for the brain. If we exempt beer, we should exempt spirits watered to the same weakness. In either case the dose must be increased so as to have the same brain power. Permit the beer traffic, and if it were possible to stop the whiskey traffic, it would be of little comparative consequence.

LETTER XIII.

Let us yield an apothecary modification *if we can.* Doing our best, *how far can we go?* Shall we give apothecaries perfect and entire right to use liquors and alcohol in compounding medicines? *They have that right to-day.*

Shall we give apothecaries every right we give town and city liquor agents? Agreed. Let them be appointed agents.

But apothecaries will not take the appointment. They want *less restriction.* They want to make more money with less trouble. Cities and towns can *now* appoint as many apothecaries as they choose. But the apothecaries themselves do not wish it.

How then can we modify? Why should we give apothecaries more latitude than agents? If existing restrictions are needed to make agents safe, they are needed to make apothecaries safe.

LETTER XIV.

It is proposed to modify the law so as to let hotels sell liquors for the table.

Why for the table? Why to *guests*, and not to others? Why give hotel-keepers a right we deny others? Every decent reason is against it.

First, the hotel traffic is the most dangerous part of the traffic.

Second, special indulgence to hotels, and the class that can pay hotel prices, would be a political blunder. It would lose two votes where it would gain one.

Drinking depends upon fashion as well as upon appetite. No laws are so strong as the laws of fashion. In dress, every feminine from the belle to the beggar, copies some Eugenie

With us in meats and drinks and in all that pertains to the table, fashion is made by the leading hotels. What they and their customers do, is the fashion plate of the community.

Hotels can make the temptations of drink greatest, and bring them nearest to every man's door. With no other occupation are we compelled to come in so close contact. Their position doubles their power of temptation. A council of fiends would select hotels as agents who are best able to fix and fasten the drinking habits of a people.

Even if license were a necessity, there could be no excuse for the infernal cruelty of bringing the temptations of drink to the hearthstones of those who do not seek it. X.

LETTER XV.

After giving these modifications our best consideration we cannot accept them. We cannot exempt beer, for we believe beer dram-shops are as bad as spirit dram-shops. We cannot exempt hotels, for so far as they are dram-shops, we believe them worse than others.

We cannot exempt sales for the table, for we believe it no worse to sell to a man that stands, than to a man that sits. We believe it no worse to sell to a man who cannot, than to a man who can afford hotel prices.

We can give apothecaries all the latitude we give town and city agents, but we cannot dispense with the same restrictions.

We wish to make the law popular and increase its vote, and to that end would restrict the least we can. But we believe these modifications would make the law worthless, and *lose two votes where they would gain one.* We are told there is little hope in fight. We answer there is no hope at all in these modifications. X.

LETTER XVI.

But ought we not to use moral effort until we are stronger?

Nothing will increase moral effort so much as a party issue. So long as anti-slavery had no party, it reached only the few who are controlled by abstract principle. Its reputation was windy and impracticable. It was politically contemptible. But as soon as it had a party of its own, it began to reach the practical mass,—got rid of its windy reputation, and carried state after state, until it controlled the policy of the nation.

An independent organization will do for us what it did for anti-slavery. It will rid us of our windy reputation. It will compel an opposing press to discuss our principles and meet our arguments. It will give moral suasion a fourfold wider field. It will make the issue separate, open and distinct. It will show what classes gravitate to either side. *We can therefore in no way add so much to moral effort as by organizing an anti-dram-shop party.*

We have reached, moreover, a point where moral suasion cannot be separated from the ballot box. More and more, from year to year, the ballot is becoming not only the record of public opinion, but the standard of right and wrong. *A political question that shuns that tribunal is lost.* X.

LETTER XVII.

But can we not fight the battle inside the Republican party?

We have tried the *inside* fight. It gives us a wavering U. S. Senator,—a compromise governor,—a constable that suggests beer, hotel, and apothecary exemptions,—judges that impose ten dollar fines, and a commissioner that buys his liquors of C. A. Richards.

It is the *inside* fight, that thus corrupts the law, impairs its force, weakens its friends, strengthens its enemies, and turns the tide of battle against us.

The inside fight corrupts legislators as well as executors of the law. A prohibitionist elected as a republican has two masters. He compromises, and defeats us on details. At best he is but half ours, and at worst he is worse than an open enemy.

As it is, the battle is against us. *The inside fight is a failure.*

Why are these republican officers thus faithless? Because they represent a divided party, and owe a divided allegiance. Because they are tied to the average sentiment of their party,—half license and half prohibition. The same men, elected or appointed by an independent prohibitory party, would be true as steel. *Such an independent party we must have or die.* X.